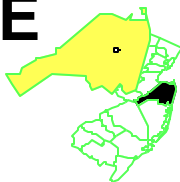


# NAVAL WEAPONS STATION EARLE NEW JERSEY

EPA ID# NJ0170022172



## EPA REGION 2 CONGRESSIONAL DIST. 12

Monmouth County  
Colts Neck

**Other Names:**  
Earle Naval Weapons Station

### Site Description

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Naval Weapons Station Earle (NWSE) covers 11,134 acres in Colts Neck. Since the early 1940s, the U.S. Navy has renovated, stored and maintained munitions at the station. These operations involve preserving and maintaining ammunition, missile components, and explosives. Twenty-seven (27) areas of concern at NWSE were identified for potential cleanup under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), and three (3) areas are being permitted under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). Wastes generated from weapons maintenance activities include: grit and paint chips from sandblasting; paint scrapings; solvent and paint sludges; lead bullets from small arms ranges; and metals including lead, zinc, and chromium. NWSE lies over an important drinking water aquifer. Approximately 1,900 residents live within a 3-mile radius of the station, and there are 500 homes on the base. An estimated 320 private and municipal wells serve 1,200 people within a 3-mile radius, and groundwater also is used for irrigation. Local surface water is used for recreation and crop irrigation. The headwaters and drainage basins of three major Coastal Plain rivers (the Swimming, the Manasquan, and the Shark), are present on the Main Base.

**Site Responsibility:** This site is being addressed through Federal actions.

#### NPL LISTING HISTORY

Proposed Date: 10/01/84

Final Date: 08/30/90

## Threats and Contaminants

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Groundwater, sediments, and soils contain elevated levels lead, chromium, and volatile organic contaminants at some areas of the base. People who come into direct contact with or ingest contaminants over a sustained period of time potentially could suffer adverse health effects. Since the facility is an active munitions storage site, public access is restricted, although hazardous areas may not be off-limits to base personnel.

## Cleanup Approach

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NWSE is being addressed through the performance of a base-wide Remedial Investigation focusing on contamination at individual sites as well as the additive effects of contamination on each watershed at the facility. Cleanup activities are fast tracked at those areas of more immediate concern. Sites have been grouped together for remediation in a phased approach.

## Response Action Status

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**Removal Actions:** The Navy has completed removal actions at sites 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, and 27. This cleanup work generally consisted of the excavation and off-site disposal of contaminated soil. At site 20, the work was completed in 1995. Work at the other Sites was completed in 1996. In total, approximately 1,189 tons of soil was removed from NWSE. In addition, 2 tons of lead (bullets and residue) was removed.



**Remedial Investigations:** From 1990 through 1995, the Navy conducted a Remedial Investigation (RI) at twenty-seven (27) separate areas of environmental concern. The investigations consisted of several rounds of groundwater, soil and sediment sampling. The objective was to determine the nature and the extent of contamination in these areas. The decisions to conduct the above-mentioned removal actions were based on these findings. Additionally, EPA and the Navy agreed, based upon the RI data, that seven (7) sites (3, 6, 12, 13, 16/F, 17, and 26) required additional sampling in order to develop feasibility study alternatives. The additional sampling work was conducted between October 1996 and January 1997.

**Site Facts:** NWSE is participating in the Installation Restoration program, a specially funded program established by the Department of Defense (DoD) in 1978 to identify, investigate, and cleanup of hazardous contaminants at military and other DoD facilities. Under a CERCLA Section 120 Interagency Agreement with EPA, the Navy has agreed to deadlines, timetables, and EPA review of decisions involving cleanup technologies.

## Environmental Progress

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Based on the information found in the Remedial Investigation phase, the Navy fast-tracked cleanup activities at various sites. At sites 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27 contaminated soil was excavated and removed; all such work was completed by December, 1996. Sites 4, 5, 19, and 26 were targeted for the first Records of Decision at NWSE. Records of Decision for sites 4, 5, and 19 were signed on September 25, 1997. The Record of Decision for site 26 was signed on September 29, 1998. The design of the air sparging system for site 26 has been completed and implementation of a full scale system began in January, 2001. The groundwater monitoring program for site 26 was initiated in March, 2001. A "No Further Action" ROD was signed on September 28, 1999, for sites 14, 20, 22, 23, 24, 24, 27 and 29.

EPA has reviewed and commented on the Record of Decision for sites 3 and 10. The remedy is landfill caps for both sites. Construction on the sites began in September, 2002, and was completed in July, 2003. EPA is currently reviewing the Record of Decision for Site 13. The remedy is a landfill cap.

The final design plans and specifications for the landfill caps at sites 4 and 5 were submitted in December, 1997. Site clearing work commenced in February, 1998 and the cap construction was completed in September, 1999. The work plan for the excavation and remediation at site 19 was submitted in December, 1997. The work commenced in January 1998 and was completed in March, 1998. The groundwater monitoring program started in July, 1999 and is ongoing.

EPA has determined that the Naval Weapons Station site does not pose an imminent threat to the surrounding population or the environment while the investigations and remediations are taking place.